

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method of managing a computer network, comprising the steps of:  
assigning to a collection computer a management domain identifier  
uniquely associated with a management domain in which each collection computer  
resides;  
receiving, in at least one management computer, information from the  
collection computer that includes the management domain identifier; and  
maintaining within the at least one management computer a database of the  
information accessed using the management domain identifier.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of assigning comprises the step  
of:  
establishing at least one management domain, wherein each management  
domain includes at least one collection computer.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the management domain identifier is a  
domain name of the management domain.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the information is network topology  
information.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving comprises the steps  
of:  
receiving first information from a first collection computer, wherein the  
first information includes a first network address and a first management domain  
identifier;

receiving second information from a second collection computer, wherein the second information includes a second network address and a second management domain identifier, wherein the second network address is identical to the first network address;

5            comparing the second network address to the first network address using the second management domain identifier and the first management domain identifier;

10           assigning a network element associated with the second network address as a primary network element when the second network address belongs to a different management domain than the first network address; and

             assigning the network element associated with the second network address as a secondary network element when the second network address belongs to a same management domain as the first network address.

15        6.        The method of claim 5, wherein the step of maintaining comprises the step of:

             using management domain identifiers to consolidate network topology information from collection computers having identical network addresses and belonging to different management domains.

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7.        The method of claim 1, comprising the step of:  
             managing, by each collection computer, at least one network object; and  
             resolving, by each collection computer, a network address of each network object into a resolved network address included in the information  
25        received at the at least one management computer.

8. A system for managing a computer network, comprising:

a plurality of collection computers, wherein each collection computer is assigned a management domain identifier uniquely associated with a management domain in which each collection computer resides;

5 at least one management computer for receiving information, from the plurality of collection computers, that includes the management domain identifier; and

10 at least one computer database for maintaining within the at least one management computer information accessed using the management domain identifier.